

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information processing apparatus that manages a predetermined device capable of performing communication over a network, comprising: comparing means for comparing a combination of first device identification information and second device identification information which are obtained from the predetermined device with another combination; and communication controlling means for controlling issuance of a notification to an external apparatus in accordance with a result of the comparison by the comparing means, the external apparatus being capable of receiving the notification through a predetermined communications line and managing a plurality of information processing apparatuses.

2. An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the comparing means determines whether or not at least one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed, and the notification issued by the communication controlling means includes information indicating that either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed.

3. An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising receiving means for receiving information corresponding to the first device identification information and the second device identification information from the external apparatus through the communications line; and holding means for holding the corresponding information received by the receiving means, wherein the comparing means compares the corresponding information held by the holding means with the combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information which are obtained from the predetermined device.

4. An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising updating means for updating first device identification information and second device identification information which are held by a holding section in accordance with a notification, for updating the combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification, from the external apparatus.

5. An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising inputting means for inputting an instruction for updating the first device identification

information and/or the second device identification information, wherein the communication controlling means issues a notification for update, based on the update instruction input by the inputting means, to the external apparatus.

6. An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising obtaining means for obtaining accounting information based on an image forming operation of a predetermined device from the predetermined device, wherein the communication controlling means issues the accounting information obtained by the obtaining means to the external apparatus and the external apparatus receives the accounting information and saves the accounting information in accordance with a notification that is issued by the communication controlling means based on a result of the comparison.

7. An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising accounting-information generating means for generating accounting information based on an image forming operation of a predetermined device; and restricting means for restricting issuance of a notification of the accounting information generated by the accounting-information generating means to the external apparatus.

8. An information processing apparatuses according to claim 7, further comprising determining means for determining whether or not a problem of a combination of first device identification information and second device identification information is solved; and removing means for removing the restriction by the restricting means, based on the determination by the determining means.

9. An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first device identification information is an internet protocol address.

10. An information processing apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the second device identification information includes at least MAC address information.

11. An information processing method for an information processing apparatus that manages a predetermined device capable of performing communication over a network, the method comprising: a comparing step of comparing a combination of first device identification information and second device identification information which are obtained from the predetermined device with another combination; and a communication controlling step of

controlling issuance of a notification to an external apparatus in accordance with a result of the comparison in the comparing step, the external apparatus being capable of receiving the notification through a predetermined communications line and managing a plurality of information processing apparatuses,.

12. An information processing method according to claim 11, wherein the comparing step determines whether or not at least one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed, and the notification issued in the communication controlling step includes information indicating that either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed.

13. An information processing method according to claim 11, further comprising a receiving step of receiving information corresponding to the first device identification information and the second device identification information from the external apparatus through the communications line; and a holding step of holding the corresponding information received in the receiving step, wherein the comparing step compares the corresponding information held in the holding

step with the combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information which are obtained from the predetermined device.

14. An information processing method according to claim 11, further comprising a step of updating first device identification information and second device identification information which are held by a holding section in accordance with a notification, for updating the combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification, from the external apparatus.

15. An information processing method according to claim 11, further comprising an inputting step of inputting an instruction for updating the first device identification information and/or the second device identification information via an input section, wherein the communication controlling step issues a notification for update, based on the update instruction input in the inputting step, to the external apparatus.

16. An information processing method according to claim 11, further comprising an obtaining step of obtaining accounting information based on an image forming operation of a predetermined device from the predetermined device,

wherein the communication controlling step issues the accounting information obtained in the obtaining step to the external apparatus and the external apparatus receives the accounting information and saves the accounting information in accordance with a notification that is issued in the communication controlling step based on a result of the comparison.

17. An information processing method according to claim 11, further comprising an accounting-information generating step of generating accounting information based on an image forming operation of a predetermined device; and a restricting step of restricting issuance of a notification of the accounting information generated in the accounting-information generating step to the external apparatus.

18. An information processing method according to claim 17, further comprising a determining step of determining whether or not a problem of a combination of first device identification information and second device identification information is solved; and a removing step of removing the restriction in the restricting step based on the determination in the determining step.

19. An information processing method according to

claim 11, wherein the first device identification information is an internet protocol address.

20. An information processing method according to claim 19, wherein the second device identification information includes at least MAC address information.

21. A program that is executed by a computer that manages a predetermined device capable of performing communication over a network, the program comprising: a comparing step of comparing a combination of first device identification information and second device identification information which are obtained from the predetermined device with another combination; and a communication controlling step of controlling issuance of a notification to an external apparatus in accordance with a result of the comparison in the comparing step, the external apparatus being capable of receiving the notification through a predetermined communications line and managing a plurality of information processing apparatuses.

22. A recording medium that is readable by a computer storing a program that is executed by an information processing apparatus that manages a predetermined device capable of performing communication over a network, the



program comprising: a comparing step of comparing a combination of first device identification information and second device identification information which are obtained from the predetermined device with another combination thereof; and a communication controlling step of controlling issuance of a notification to an external apparatus in accordance with a result of the comparison in the comparing step, the external apparatus being capable of receiving the notification through a predetermined communications line and managing a plurality of information processing apparatuses.